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Senior Enlisted Leadership Changes Hands at Walter Reed Bethesda



Photo by Bernard S. Little

From left, Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) director, departing WRNMMC Command Master Chief Terry J. Prince, and arriving WRNMMC Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis pay respect to the nation during the Command Senior Enlisted Leader's Change of Charge Ceremony July 11 in Memorial Auditorium.

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer

With the passing of a seagoing Sailor's cutlass, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center's (WRNMMC) senior enlisted leadership changed hands from Command Master Chief (CMC) Terry J. Prince to Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis during a ceremony July 11 in WRNMMC's Memorial Auditorium.

Director for WRNMMC, Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark saluted Prince and Willis, and welcomed their families and the entire Walter Reed Bethesda

community to the ceremony. "There is no greater patriot than the family of an American service member," the general said, as an Airman and Soldier presented bouquets of roses to Prince's wife, Jennifer, and Willis' wife, Renee.

Clark called the senior enlisted leadership position at WRNMMC, "an immense privilege," particularly because of three things Walter Reed Bethesda does — "fulfill the mission, take care of each other, and take care of families." To highlight the role of the senior enlisted leader, he then read from four creeds and one oath of the

branches of the armed forces and civilian federal service.

From the U.S. Army Creed of the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO), Clark read: "No one is more professional than I. My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind — the accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers."

From the Marine Corps NCO Creed, the general read: "I realize of Marine Corps discipline, and I carry myself with military grace, unbowed by the weight of command, unflinching in the execution of lawful orders, and unswerving in my

dedication to the most complete success of my assigned mission."

Summing up the U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer Creed, Clark stated: "Challenge is good; a great and necessary reality which cannot mar you — which in fact, strengthens you. The Chief Petty Officer plays an integral role in the training, mentorship and the development of our people, executing the mission while simultaneously taking care of our people."

The general read from the Airman's Creed, "I am faithful to a proud heritage, a tradition of honor, and a legacy of valor. I will never falter, and I will not fail."

From the oath civilian personnel take upon entering federal service, Clark read: "I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without mental reservation or with purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office of which I am about to enter. So help me God." The general also pointed out this is the same oath people take when entering the U.S. Armed Forces.

Clark continued, thanking Prince for

his "professionalism, dedication to mission, people and [personal] friendship." The general then welcomed Willis onboard WRNMMC, "to serve those who serve: the very best patients in the world — service members and their families, retirees and their families. What we do truly matters."

Prince became WRNMMC's first command master chief and senior enlisted leader in the fall of 2011 when the new facility was renamed following the integration of the former Walter Reed Army Medical Center (WRAMC) and former Nation-

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Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Chris Krucke

From left, departing Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Command Master Chief Terry J. Prince, WRNMMC Director Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark, and arriving WRNMMC Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis cut the cake celebrating the Command Senior Enlisted Leader Change of Charge.

Principles of Naval Leadership

There is a story about a man who was victim to a terrible storm. A torrential rain fell from the sky and filled the rivers to overflowing. As the streets turned into rivers, floodwaters soon reached the doorstep of the man's house. The water surrounded the house and soon swallowed it, foot by foot. The man crawled on the roof to get away from the rising water. He pleaded to God to rescue him, waiting eagerly for help, but no one came. He sat there on the roof as he watched a horse swim by and then it slowly disappeared toward town. Not long after, a huge log floated by within arm's reach. The rising water slowly overtook the man's house and he died. When he saw the Lord in heaven he said, "Lord, I prayed for you to save me but you never came." The Lord answered, "I sent a horse so you could ride on his back to safety, then I sent a huge log for you to escape on, but you decided not to choose either." The point of the story? Make sound and timely decisions.

There are 11 Principles of Naval Leadership listed in the Naval Leader Planning Guide for 2014. Before I share with you the elements of one of these principles, I want to say how proud I am of our men and women who make up our military forces. One character trait that stands as a pillar of our strength rests in the arms of leadership, which each of you have a role to play in and support.

Every branch of service defines leadership differently to meet the challenges of their unique culture. It is my intent to introduce to you my perspective on one of the established Navy leadership principles and not to diminish the valuable leadership principles recognized within our sister services.

Naval leadership includes a diverse force of professionals who wear the military uniform and those that do not. In other words, Naval leadership is not dependent on title, rank or position but on initiative, decisiveness and commitment. In fact, the Navy Ethos embraces Sailors and civilians as co-equals in "exemplifying the highest standards of service to our Nation."

The eighth Principle of Naval Leadership is "Make sound and timely decisions." Its supporting elements introduce the concept of choice. The five simple elements to this principle are not all-inclu-



sive to effective leadership yet they provide a solid foundation to YOUR growth as a leader.

- Develop a logical and orderly thought process by practicing objective estimates of the situation. Let's face it, tough decisions are not always easy to make. I find the best approach in addressing tough decisions is to begin with a thoughtful consideration of the end result in mind. Focus on the facts of the circumstance you are addressing in order to aid your final decision.

- When time and situation permit, plan for every possible event that can reasonably be foreseen. You cannot foresee every possible outcome, all the time. Nevertheless, you can sure try! An effective leader will contemplate all possible outcomes before making a decision.

- Consider the advice and suggestions of your subordinates before making decisions. Your employees and co-workers will respect you when you honestly seek their advice on matters where you are the one making the final decision. After all, they are the subject matter experts and you would be foolish not to seek their input.

- Make sure your people are familiar with your policies and plans. If you are responsible for only one person who looks to you for guidance and direction, then you are a leader. If you fail in providing clear direction and expectations, then your policies and plans will not be put into effect.

- Consider the effects of your decisions on all members of your unit. You may not be able to satisfy everyone with your decisions, but understanding how your decisions can affect all those involved will help you make the best decisions that all will be able to support.

It takes courage to make a decision. Like our friend in the opening story, he made the decision not to take responsibility. As leaders, YOU can make an impact on the choices you make. Remember, not making a decision is a decision. It's your responsibility to strive and make the best informed decisions you possibly can.

Capt. Phillip M. Sanchez, MSC, USN
Executive Officer,
Navy Medicine Professional
Development Center

Bethesda Notebook

DOD Enterprise Email Migration

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center email users will transition to a Department of Defense Enterprise Email service managed by the Defense Information Systems Agency. The migration will take place Aug. 19 through 22. There are pre and post migration steps users need to perform in order to make email migration successful. For more information, contact Luis Lopez at Luis.R.Lopez@health.mil.

Young Adults and Cancer

If you are a young adult (age 18 to 39) affected by cancer and want to meet and talk with others your age who are dealing with cancer, the John P. Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda is hosting meetings July 23 at 12:30 p.m. in the America Building, third floor, Rm. 3558; Aug. 6 at noon in the same location and Aug. 20 at 11:30 in the Physical Therapy Department, America Building, first floor, Rm. 1018. For more information and to RSVP, email Meghan Fitzgibbons at Meghan.k.fitzgibbons.ctr@health.mil.

Prostate Cancer Support Group

The Prostate Cancer Support Group meets at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center the third Thursday of every month. The next meetings will be today from 1 to 2 p.m. and 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the America Building, River Conference Room on the third floor. Spouses and partners are invited. For more information, contact Dr. Jane Hudak at 301-319-2918, or email jane.l.hudak.ctr@health.mil.

Pool Closure

The pool in Building 17 on Naval Support Activity Bethesda will be closed today through Aug. 18 for maintenance and deep cleaning. For more information, call the Fitness Center at 301-295-2450.

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Walter Reed Bethesda Focused on Improving Administrative Efforts

WRNMMC Director Calls on Staff to Create Positive Experiences for Patients

By Bernard S. Little
WRNMMC Public Affairs staff writer

Noted for its high quality care, Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) continues to broaden its focus while improving services and making the entire patient experience exceptional, WRNMMC Director Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark explained during a recent town hall meeting at the facility.

"Our focus has remained on high quality health care and wounded warrior care, as it should be, but having said that, I believe there are some things we can do better," the general said.

Clark stated that in addition to continuing to deliver world-class patient care, WRNMMC is focused on improving administratively, meeting its service goals of excellence, data quality, safety and operating room utilization campaign initiatives.

"I can see us moving in a positive direction," Clark said. "I believe we have very good people, but I believe we still need to look for opportunities to lean forward to proactively create conditions positive for our patients," he continued.

Navy Capt. (Dr.) David Larson, of the directorate of clinical support services and champion for the service excellence campaign, explained the campaign encompasses promoting patient-friendly staff attitudes, improving patient-staff communication and providing patient and family-centered care. He said it's important for all staff at WRNMMC to make the patient experience excellent, beginning with the making of appoint-

ments, convenience in location to beneficiaries, improving base access and parking for patients, improving front desk courtesy, care and services on the wards and in clinics, as well as discharge and follow-up communication. "It really is the whole experience of care, and that involves everybody," he continued.

Larson added WRNMMC is also looking at starting the Q.U.E.S.T. (Quality, Excellence, Safety and Teamwork) program to celebrate military and civilian staff members who demonstrate outstanding customer service. The Q.U.E.S.T. program will seek to empower and encourage a patient, family member, supervisor, co-worker or WRNMMC visitor to commend an individual or staff member for customer service excellence. He also mentioned the medical center is looking at providing valet parking services for its patients.

Following Larson, Walter Reed Bethesda Chief of Staff Navy Capt. Sarah Martin explained the medical center's initiatives in its quality and safety campaign, being led by Dr. Thomas Fitzpatrick, assistant chief of staff for quality.

"Quality is really the center of what we do in all of our areas," Martin said. She added as part of the quality campaign, WRNMMC is revitalizing its patient safety reporting system and implementing Team-STEPPS (Team Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient and Safety), and improving transition of care procedures.

Also during the town hall, Army Col. (Dr.) Thomas Burklow, WRNMMC director of

health care operations, discussed the data quality campaign. He echoed Clark's sentiments that while the medical center delivers world-class care, its administration procedures must also follow suit. He explained that efforts to bring the medical center's administration in line with its high quality care are focused on improving its Defense Medical Human Resources System – internet efforts, identifying staff and where they work, filled and vacant positions, training records and hours charged to each work center, as well as readiness information for medical asset visibility.

In addition, Burklow explained that other data quality campaign lines of effort include identifying non-WRNMMC costs attributed to the medical center; improving in-processing and out-processing for personnel; ensuring the proper coding of records; increasing productivity and the capturing of workload by standardizing ambulatory procedure visits processes; establishing an automated procedure for dictation and transcription of medical reports into the electronic health record system; and increasing productivity and capturing surgeons' workloads and other providers for inpatient surgeries and procedures.

In line with the latter, Navy Capt. (Dr.) Philip Perdue discussed operating room optimization, explaining that WRNMMC surgeons are providing care across the National Capital Region enhanced Multi-Service Market network, primarily for the convenience of patients. "It's an exciting time and surgery is leading the charge forward in [providing services] across the entire region."

Clark explained this is part of WRNMMC's

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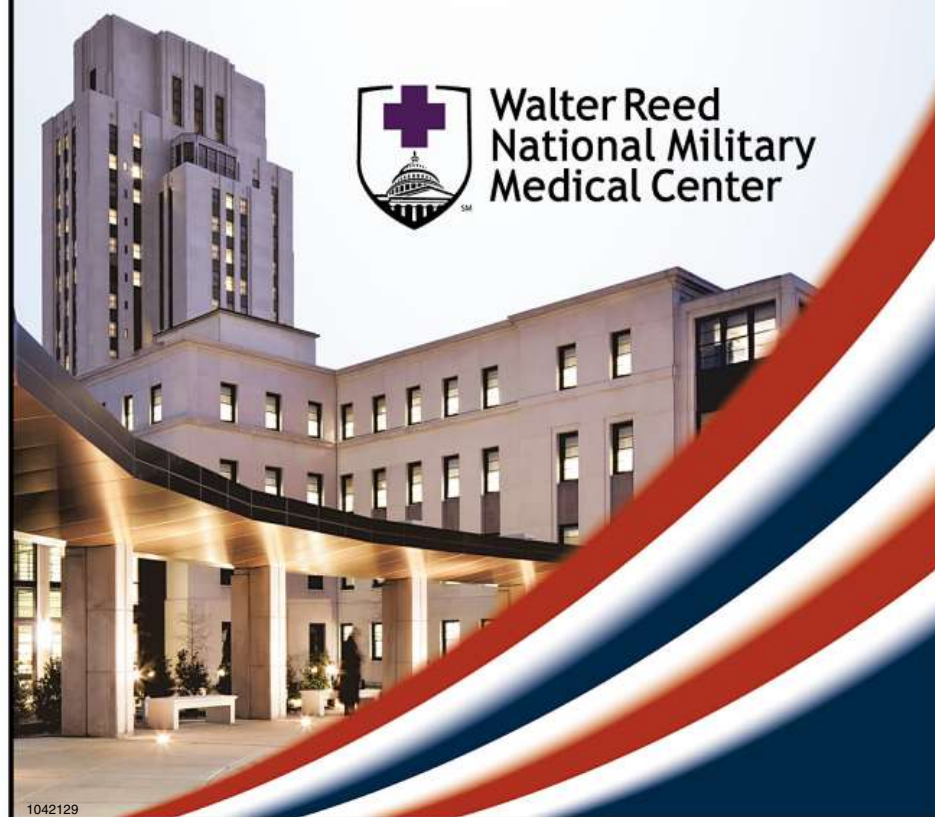
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Resources Available to Support Work-Life Balance

By Julie Smith
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

Balancing the demands of work and family isn't always easy, but Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) aboard Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB) has resources available to help civilian workers, family members and retirees through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) according to coordinator, Amanda Maher.

Maher explained her job is to offer short-term counseling and community resource referrals to help workers address personal or job-related issues that might interfere with their work performance, health or happiness.

"Work-life balance is a very frequent issue," Maher said. "It's one of those things that we talk about a lot but it never really gets put into action or people are confused about how to do it."

At the White House Summit on Working Families held June 23, President Barack Obama underscored the continued struggle American households face trying to balance work and family

and signed a Presidential memorandum encouraging federal employers to offer more flexible work schedules.

Maher said the struggle of work-life balance sometimes results from individuals not setting reasonable boundaries at work because they want to be successful professionally.

"I think a lot of people are defined by their work life because they're afraid someone will take their place, and that's a legitimate fear. We all want to succeed and we don't want to get surpassed by our coworkers," Maher said. "It really starts with giving yourself permission to have that boundary and realizing that in order to be happy at work and at home, you really need to have that boundary. That also means being okay with the fact that a coworker might surpass you."

Work-life balance is made even tougher as a result of technology, Maher stated. Text messaging and smartphones with email access are limiting privacy and family time, she said.

"When you get a text message your impulse is to check it. It doesn't mat-

ter if your job ends at 5 p.m. If your boss emails you at 8 p.m. about a project the next morning, there's that unspoken expectation that you'll respond," Maher said. "Technology is outrunning us and we have to learn skills to be able to set boundaries."

In her experience, Maher has worked with people who have difficulty even turning off their mobile devices. She suggests setting a goal to "tune out" when the work day is over.

"For some people it can be really tough, but once you get to a place where it's normal, there is so much relief," Maher said. "People have to say, 'There are eight hours in a work day. I'm going to be the best worker I can be in those eight hours, but after my shift is done, I have to be able to turn it off. Everything after eight hours is my time for me and my family.'"

Often time management is an issue, and Maher said workers can improve their time management skills by reading a self-help book, taking a class or talking to friends to see how they manage their time wisely. Making a manageable to-do list or writing worries and con-

cerns in a journal just to get it out is also helpful, she said.

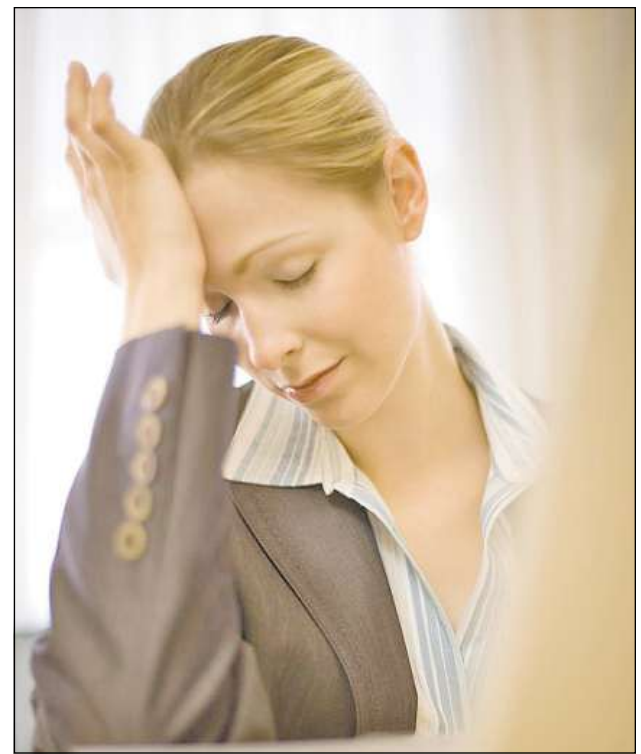
Another practical tip to improving work-life balance is to take a five minute break several times a day. An easy way for workers to do this is to restart their computers, which usually takes several minutes to reboot. While the computer restarts, Maher suggests stretching or taking some deep breaths.

Eating right, exercising and getting enough sleep are also essential to work-life balance, Maher said.

"If you're not doing any of those things, you're not going to be very good to anyone, so you have to be good to yourself first," she said. "Self-care is the first thing to go when we're stressed, but what we don't realize is self-care will make us more productive."

To support work-life balance, WRNMMC holds quarterly Prosperity Fairs where employees can get help in attaining personal, professional and spiritual goals.

"The Prosperity Fair is a program encouraging all employees and family members to set goals in personal and professional relationships and spiritual realms, maximizing



Courtesy photo

the potential of our employees," Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Zak, WRNMMC chief clinical NCO, said.

In addition to the Prosperity Fair, Maher said there are many resources available at the NSAB Fleet and Family Support Center to assist with work-life balance, including classes and workshops.

Finally, Maher said it's important to communicate to people when making changes to enhance work-life balance.

"That's where the EAP can really help," she said. "You need to have that difficult conversation with your boss or your coworkers and let them know you're making an effort to improve your work-life balance."

The EAP operates at WRNMMC Monday through Thursday from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment only. All services are free of charge. For more information, call 301-400-0077.

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Command Ball Caps are Back

COs to Have Authority to Allow Ball Caps with NWUs

By Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Elliott Fabrizio
Chief of Naval Personnel,
Public Affairs

For many Sailors, ball caps are more than just a cover; they're pride.

At the conclusion of battle stations-the final test in boot camp-new Sailors remove their recruit ball cap, having earned the right to don a new cover: a ball cap emblazoned with the word 'Navy.'

When these young Sailors join the Fleet, their generic Navy ball cap is set aside for a command ball cap, identifying them as a proud member of their new command.

So during all hands calls when senior leaders candidly ask Sailors what changes they want, many ask for more opportunity to wear their command ball caps, specifically the option to wear it with the Navy Working Uniform (NWU).

Now it's happening.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus and senior leadership took that request to heart, and on July 11 the Office of the Chief of Naval Personnel (CNP) announced they are changing the uniform regulations to give individual commands the ability authorize command ball caps with the NWU Type I, II and III.

"A lot of Sailors look at command ball caps as a source of command pride and esprit de corps," said Fleet Master Chief April Beldo, senior enlisted advisor to CNP. "This is something the Fleet asked us for, and we believe this is something the commands should be able to decide for themselves. So all we're doing is opening up that option to the command triads, the CO, XO and CMC."

Under the new policy, commanding officers, working with regional commanders, have the option to authorize command ball caps for Sailors in NWUs, anywhere that uniform could normally be worn, including transiting to and from work.

"It's not our intent to tell COs how to do this," said Vice Adm. Bill Moran, CNP. "We're leaving it up to COs to use their best judgment. That's what they're there to do and they are the ones best suited to make those decisions for their command."

The NAVADMIN outlining the official policy will be released in the next few weeks, and the new policy is scheduled to go into effect Sept. 1, giving commands some lead time to prepare.

Under current policy, ball caps can only be worn with coveralls, flight suits and the physical training uniform.

This change will not eliminate the eight-point NWU cover, which will remain part of the standard sea bag.

In an informal poll, Sailors aboard the forward-deployed USS George H. W. Bush (CVN 77) shared their opinions, which diverged both in support of command ball caps and the eight-point cover.

"I like the idea of changing to the ball caps," said Master Chief Machinist's Mate Milton McDonald. "They are much easier to maintain. The eight-point covers do not always have the best fit, and it would be much easier to correct a Sailor who is wearing an adjustable ball cap."

"I think we should keep the traditional eight-point covers," said Culinary Specialist 3rd Class Clyde Scott. "Sailors look so much sharper and squared away in those covers."

In the new policy, individual commands will make the decision on whether their Sailors wear command ball caps, eight-point covers or some combination based on local requirements.

Sailors can provide feedback on uniforms to umo_cmc@navy.mil or usnpeople@gmail.com.



U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Declan Barnes

Quartermaster 2nd Class Jacques Chenet, from New York, assigned to the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Kidd, stands watch on the bridge as the ship enters port in Hong Kong. Kidd is currently on patrol in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of responsibility supporting regional security and stability in the Indo-Asia Pacific region.




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Group Offers Support for Young Adults with Cancer

**By Sharon
Renee Taylor
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer**

In December 2012, during the middle of her deployment to the Arabian Gulf on the Nimitz-class, nuclear-powered aircraft carrier U.S.S. John C. Stennis, Ship Serviceman 3rd Class Shannon Shepherd felt sick with flu-like symptoms. The petty officer received antibiotics, which she took, and felt fine. She was 22.

In January 2013, she began to notice bruising. "Maybe it's from work," she thought, considering her job in supply.

"I put it on the backburner but they started to get bigger, the size of baseballs, and they started going down my leg," Shepherd said.

She began losing her appetite and as the days went on, the Sailor felt fatigued — constantly sleeping, unmotivated to do anything — just the opposite of her active, always-moving self, Shepherd explained.

A blood test indicated her platelets were below normal; her hemoglobin and her white blood count were low as well. Shepherd was told she had cancer.

"My whole body just went into a funk, and I cried. The only thing I could think about was, 'Am I going to die? Will I be able to see my family again, be able to tell them what's going on?'" Shepherd recalled.

She explained she was kept in medical aboard the ship for 24 hours until she was medevaced to Bahrain, and later transferred to Al Udeid Air Base in Qatar where she remained for three days. There she received blood transfusions until she was stable enough to travel to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany, where she was diagnosed with leukemia — one of the most common cancer types in adolescents and young adults (AYA), according to the National Cancer Institute (NCI). Leukemia starts in blood-forming tissue,

like bone marrow, and causes a large number of abnormal blood cells to be produced and enter the bloodstream, NCI officials explained.

February 19, 2013, Shepherd arrived at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) and was admitted directly to the intensive care unit. Diagnosed with T-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia, she's received chemotherapy, bone marrow aspirations, spinal taps and a protocol of cranial radiation.

Currently in the maintenance phase of her disease, Shepherd and her mother Sharon Rampertab recently met other young adults between the ages of 18 and 39 dealing with cancer and their loved ones July 9, during a gathering hosted by the John P. Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda. Shepherd said she liked the group. Rampertab indicated she "got good vibes" from the gathering, and wants more people to attend the next event July



Photo by Sharon Renee Taylor

Army Spc. Devyn Wilcox, a medic, checks the blood sugar of Ship Serviceman 3rd Class Shannon Shepherd. The 24-year-old Sailor was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia in February 2013.

23. Shepherd also met with Young Adult Patient Navigator Meghan Fitzgibbons, a new addition to the cancer center on staff to assist patients in the Sailor's age group.

Fitzgibbons said her role as AYA patient navigator is to help with the special concerns and needs of being a young

adult dealing with cancer, including issues related to school and work, educational scholarships, financial assistance, fostering one-on-one connections between young adult survivors, as well as helping address relationships with loved ones and providing fertility preservation assistance.

"There's hope. [There are] resources. There's camaraderie," Rampertab said about Walter Reed Bethesda's effort to provide additional support to meet the challenges of adolescents and young adults with cancer.

Nearly 70,000 people

See **CANCER** Page 8

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center 'VolunTeen' Program Offers Unique Opportunity

**By Kalila Fleming
WRNMMC Public
Affairs staff writer**

"I've always wanted to volunteer at a hospital, ...I want to be an anesthesiologist, so I want to see what it's like actually to live in a hospital, be in a hospital 24/7, do surgeries and get that whole environment down," Nigel Smith, 17, of Bethesda, Md., said regarding his VolunTeen position in the Oral and Maxillofacial department at the national medical center.

Smith was one of the 59 high school students selected for this summer's American Red Cross VolunTeen Program at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC).

The American Red Cross VolunTeen Program is a competitive program, geared towards high school students ages 14 through 18, interested in military medicine or working in a hospital. The program runs for six weeks, July 1 to August 15, and the students will be volunteering anywhere from three to five days per week.

Marin Reynes, senior station manager for the WRNMMC Red Cross, said that students have to write an essay, and send in a student or coach recommendation letter that will be graded and ranked by Cassie Corbyons, the VolunTeen Coordinator.

A vast majority of this year's VolunTeens have a parent or relative in the

military; however, that is not a requirement for entrance into the program, Kathleen Kelly, WRNMMC American Red Cross assistant coordinator said.

Once students are selected into the program they all partake in an orientation, "where students who aren't a part of the military culture and aren't a dependent learn what the military is all about," Reynes said.

Students placed in selected departments also get to observe procedures on patients.

Smith, a VolunTeen in the Oral and Maxillofacial department, has witnessed a few surgeries since he began his tenure.

Smith said, "My first surgery was a tiny one.

I was watching someone get their wisdom teeth pulled. The second one was a person getting a nose job done, that was pretty interesting ... I saw an implant with anesthesia, that was pretty gross. [The surgeon] taught me a lot about anesthesia." He said, "I learned the basics and it was a really interesting time, it was four hours watching something like that."

The 59 VolunTeen students are in 36 departments and clinics throughout the medical center. Those clinics and departments range from Executive Medicine and Orthopaedics to the Judge Advocate General Office, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Warrior Transition Brigade.



Photo by Bernard S. Little

American Red Cross VolunTeen Joshua Kim provides support in the John P. Murtha Cancer Center at Walter Reed Bethesda, performing a variety of administrative duties.

Kelly added the VolunTeen program has grown exponentially since it was established three years ago. Since Corbyons became the program coordinator last year, she has taken the program to a new level, Kelly continued, and with her efforts, Kelly believes the program will continue thriving.

"This is my third year

here, this is my third teen program, and in the last three years it's grown significantly," Kelly said. "Last year when Cassie took over as the volunteer lead, she completely re-vamped the program, re-vamped how we do the application process, how we choose the kids, and this year was the first

See **VOLUNTEEN** Page 10

Just Dive In!

MWR Scuba Program Introduces First-Time Divers to Ocean Wonders

By Mass
Communication
Specialist 2nd Class
Ashanté Hammons
NSAB Public Affairs
staff writer

Imagine a world filled with schools of fish, sea turtles, sharks, coral reefs and other amazing sights around you. It is a breathtaking and absolute change from walking on shore. Instead of wondering what lives in the ocean, you are in the ocean, among these creatures. How can you visit this wondrous place in person? By learning how to scuba dive with the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) program at Naval Support Activity Bethesda (NSAB).

"After my initial train-

ing in 1979, the first time I got to really scuba dive was down in Key West," said Joe Lodmell, MWR scuba instructor at NSAB. "To jump in the water, and see the schools of fish in every imaginable color was incredible! We spent 45 minutes swimming between the coral heads, [and I was] absolutely amazed at the color and variety of sea life. There were lobsters, nurse sharks, anemones and all kinds of critters [in the ocean]!"

That enthusiasm for diving inspired Bryan Jackson, NSAB MWR aquatic fitness manager and fitness trainer, to ask Lodmell to be an MWR scuba instructor. Jackson described Lodmell as a 'dive master' since "he's

been teaching scuba for 15 years."

Jackson said he wanted an instructor who would teach a longer course for three weeks instead of weekend courses, off base.

"All the classes off base were weekend classes," said Jackson. "The instructors sent the students books for the course and they studied all week. On Saturday, the students showed up to do classroom [work] for eight hours. Then, on Sunday, they went to the pool for eight hours and they're done. That was it."

"I didn't learn that way and I have never been a fan of that way of teaching," Jackson explained. "I mean, that's not really my idea of learning. When Joe came in to teach the



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Ashanté Hammons

Air Force 2nd Lt. Armando Aguilera, left, dives into the pool as Army 2nd Lt. Dean Miller waits his turn to dive in the Building 17 Fitness Center pool.

class, people just loved it," said Jackson, smiling. "I said to Joe, 'As long as you are willing to teach here, let's continue [scuba courses].'"

For the past three years, Lodmell has taught scuba diving at NSAB for active duty, dependents, Department of Defense employees and contractors every Tuesday and Thursday evening starting at 6 p.m. Students hear about the course through Jackson, MWR events or emails.

"I got information from

him," said Air Force 2nd Lt. Logan Clemons, Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU), pointing to Army 2nd Lt. Dean Miller, who was with Clemons. "We are getting stationed in Hawaii."

"That's how I found out about this course, too," said Air Force 2nd Lt. Armando Aguilera, USU student. "I'm also getting stationed in Hawaii. I thought this would be a good time to learn scuba before I go." Aguilera and Miller agreed.

While in class, students ask questions about assigned reading or the scuba experience. Lodmell even reviews information not covered in the book.

"You go down to Hawaii and you sign up with a scuba shop and you want to go on a dive trip," said Lodmell. "You ask yourself, 'What's my experience going to be like? What should I think about when I go on my first dive trip?'"

See DIVE Page 8

United States Navy Promotes Michelle Howard to 4-Star Admiral

From Defense
Media Activity

The United States Navy promoted Michelle Janine Howard to the rank of four-star admiral July 1 during a ceremony at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus presided over the ceremony and administered the oath of office.

Adm. Howard is the first female four-star in the 238 year history of the United States Navy.

"Michelle Howard's promotion to the rank of admiral is the result of a brilliant naval career, one I fully expect to continue when she assumes her new role as vice chief of naval operations, but also it is a historic first, an event to be celebrated as she becomes the first female to achieve this position," said Mabus. "Her accomplishment

is a direct example of a Navy that now, more than ever, reflects the nation it serves — a nation where success is not borne of race, gender or religion, but of skill and ability."

"Michelle's many trail-blazing accomplishments in her 32 years of naval service are evidence of both her fortitude and commitment to excellence and integrity," said Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert. "I look forward to many great things to come from the Navy's newest 4-star Admiral!"

Howard, the Deputy CNO for Operations, Plans, and Strategy, will relieve Adm. Mark Ferguson III as the 38th Vice Chief of Naval Operations.

Howard is a 1978 graduate of Gateway High School in Aurora, Colo. She graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1982 and from the Army's Com-



U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Peter D. Lawlor

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus, left, and Wayne Cowles, husband of Adm. Michelle Howard, put four-star shoulder boards on Howard's service white uniform during her promotion ceremony at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial. Howard is the first woman to be promoted to the rank of admiral in the history of the Navy and will assume the duties and responsibilities as the 38th Vice Chief of Naval Operations from Adm. Mark Ferguson.

mand and General Staff College in 1998, with a Masters in Military Arts and Sciences.

Howard's initial sea tours were aboard USS Hunley (AS 31) and USS

Lexington (AVT 16). While serving on board Lexington, she received the Secretary of the Navy/ Navy League Captain Winifred Collins award in May 1987. This award is

given to one woman officer a year for outstanding leadership. She reported to USS Mount Hood (AE 29) as chief engineer in 1990 and served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. She assumed duties as first lieutenant on board the USS Flint (AE 32) in July 1992. In January 1996, she became the executive officer of USS Tortuga (LSD 46) and deployed to the Adriatic in support of Operation Joint Endeavor, a peacekeeping effort in the former Republic of Yugoslavia. Sixty days after returning from the Mediterranean deployment, Tortuga departed on a West African training cruise, where the ship's Sailors, with embarked Marines and U.S. Coast Guard detachment, operated with the naval services of seven African nations.

She then took command of USS Rushmore (LSD 47) on March 12,

1999, becoming the first African American woman to command a ship in the U.S. Navy. Howard was the commander of Amphibious Squadron Seven from May 2004 to September 2005. Deploying with Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) 5, operations included tsunami relief efforts in Indonesia and maritime security operations in the North Arabian Gulf. She commanded Expeditionary Strike Group Two from April 2009 to July 2010. In 2009, she deployed to CENTCOM theater, where she commanded Task Force 151, Multi-national Counterpiracy effort and Task Force 51, Expeditionary Forces. In 2010, she was the Maritime Task Force commander for BALTOPS, under 6th Fleet.

She was the 2011 USO Military Woman of the Year, and the 2013 NAACP Chairman's Image Award recipient.

CANCER

Continued from pg. 6

between the ages of 15 and 39 are diagnosed with cancer each year, according to NCI, which also reports that cancer kills more people in the AYA age group than any other disease. The agency states that, while survival rates have steadily improved for children and adults who have cancer, improvements in survival have lagged behind for AYAs because of a variety of reasons including delayed diagnoses, limited understanding of cancers in this population, low access to and participation in clinical trials, and the unique psychosocial and supportive care needs of these patients like isolation, employment, financial concerns and fertility.

Many young adults in their 20s and 30s, which include the majority of the active duty population, develop cancers that are similar to the types of cancers young children develop, particularly leukemias, lymphomas and soft tissue (muscle) or bone cancers, explained Air Force Col. Thomas C. Newton, chief of Pediatric

Hematology/Oncology at the Murtha Cancer Center, who also serves as a clinical associate professor of pediatrics, and associate program director for the pediatric hematology/oncology fellowship at the Uniformed Services University.

"The cure rate is higher for these patients when their cancers are treated on protocols designed for children rather than older adults. Pediatric oncologists who are the most familiar with these treatment regimens are often called upon to care for these patients, as in the case of Walter Reed [Bethesda] where several young active duty members are receiving their cancer care," Newton said.

Shepherd said she's grateful for the pediatric oncology team that provides her care, including pediatric oncology social worker Stacey Springer, who initiated the support group the Sailor and her mother look forward to attending again next week.

"It is important for the AYA cancer patient and their family to have an opportunity to network with [other] patients and family members that are or have experienced similarities with their cancer journey,"

Springer explained. The social worker said she hopes the new group will provide them with a sense of emotional peace and recognition that they are important, and that their needs as well as issues will be heard within a larger community. The group of peers can discuss side effects, communicating with their command, or how to adjust to their new "normal," Springer said.

Sheppard, now 24, said she re-enlisted prior to her deployment to the Arabian Gulf and subsequent diagnosis. She planned to make the Navy her career and aspired to become a chief. Although her appetite is returning and she is gaining strength during her recovery, she indicated it's unlikely she'll remain in the same job, and seeks a different rating. She also hopes to earn a college degree.

The next AYA group will meet July 23 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m., on the third floor of the America Building, Room 3558. To RSVP for the July 23 event, or direct questions to the AYA patient navigator, please email Meghan Fitzgibbons at Meghan.K.Fitzgibbons.ctr@health.mil.

DIVE

Continued from pg. 7

How should I prepare? What should I pack?"

Lodwell added that students and instructors often discuss these questions and other necessities for a dive trip. He emphasized that divers should be rested, nourished and hydrated before going on a dive trip. Divers should also be aware of sea sickness because a boat ride to some dive spots could take a couple of hours.

"Once we're done with class time, we go to the pool and do the real stuff," said Lodmell. "The first week of class is for swim evaluation and some snorkeling skills. After that, students move right into scuba: tanks, regulators, buoyancy compensator and all the way through."

Before the students dive into the water, each person checks their gear several times. Then, students and instructors check each other's gear. One by one, they step off the diving board and dive into the pool. They surface and face the instructors

standing on the deck. As each diver takes one arm to form a half circle in order to place their fingertips on the crown, they signal that they're okay and submerge deeper into the water. Finally, the instructors join them in the water. They have joined the ranks of scuba divers worldwide.

"Being a scuba instructor is fantastic!" said Lodmell. "I tell my students on the first night about how excited I am for them, because they still get to see their first sea turtle! They still get to see their first shark! How exciting is that? I love to share those firsts with my students."

According to Jackson, scuba diving can change your life as well as your travel plans. It is not just another hobby; rather, it becomes a lifestyle.

"When you become scuba certified, every vacation after that becomes a dive vacation," said Jackson. "You realize you spent the time, the effort [and] the money to have the equipment. Now you get to explore this new world and you want to take advantage of it as much as you can."

For more information about MWR scuba courses, contact Bryan Jackson at Bryan.jackson2@med.navy.mil.

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ENLISTED

Continued from pg. 1

al Naval Medical Center (NNMC). He became the first senior enlisted advisor for the Defense Health Agency (DHA) in Falls Church, Va., in February. Master Chief Maria Fernandez served as WRNMMC's acting senior enlisted leader during the transition from Prince to Willis.

“What I miss most about [WRNMMC] having been at DHA, is the day-to-day interaction with just the sheer number of young men and women I had a chance to meet with directly every day,” Prince said. “Time went by so quickly, and it feels like we just started this mission.”

He added despite the challenges of integration, staff at WRNMMC, “Soldiered, Sailed, Airmanned, and civilianed on. What you did mattered. I saw the pride in your eyes as you cemented the integration of two world-class facilities that were NNMC and WRAMC into one at Bethesda, now known

as the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda.”

The command master chief continued, adding the legacy of WRNMMC is “forged in the blood, sweat and tears of the men and women who made [the world-renowned facility] what it is today,” and it is the responsibility of those who are now here, to carry on that legacy, “you are a shining example of excellence,” he said.

Prince said his successor will find “amazing and incredible talent at [WRNMMC] in the staff. People make this place work. [They] are its lifeblood. They’re awe-inspiring, and there was never a more challenging and rewarding place to serve,” he concluded.

Willis, a native of Memphis, Tenn., comes to WRNMMC after serving as command master chief at Naval Hospital Beaufort, S.C. He also served as CMC onboard the USS Ross (DDG 71) Norfolk, Va. He is designated as a national emergency medical technician and has completed a number of fleet and shore assignments. He participated in Opera-

tion Desert Shield/Desert Storm — 1st Battalion 8th Marines, Second Marine Division, Camp LeJeune, N.C.; Strong Resolve — USS Wasp (LHD 1); Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom — USS Juneau (LPD 10).

He praised the efforts of his predecessor, saying to Prince, “You’ve done a remarkable thing here, and if I accomplish just half of what you accomplished, then I will have been a success.” He also called Walter Reed Bethesda “a family which he is here to support and serve.”

The new WRNMMC senior enlisted leader said he is a patient’s advocate, and “patients are our number one priority, bar none.”

“We are Walter Reed Bethesda [and] there is none better,” Willis said. “What we do matters, but more importantly, you matter,” he added.

The ceremony concluded with the U.S. Naval Academy Brass Quintet playing the services’ songs and the cutting of a cake by Clark, Prince and Willis.

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VOLUNTEEN

Continued from pg. 6

year that we had more applicants than we did jobs so we created the wait list, I have a sneaking suspicion that next year, there are folks that just won't get into the program."

With the growing rate of the program, students shared their stories about how they found out about the VolunTeen program and what advice they would give to other teens that are interested.

Sebastian Renda, 17, of McLean, Va., and a VolunTeen in the Executive Medicine Clinic found out after his father, who recently retired from the Army, had surgery at WRNMMC a year ago. He said, "when I was here I saw the Red Cross people that were helping out and later my dad went and figured out that there was a program I could join over the summer so I went and signed up."

Rockville native and volunteer in the Executive Medicine department, Darren Danaie, 15, knew that this would be a great opportunity for his future endeavors.

Danaie said, "My mom actually works here [at WRNMMC], in the allergy clinic [and] she saw some of the VolunTeens that went to her clinic and she thought this would be a good chance."

Smith admitted that, "any person that wants to get into this program for next year, on the application and the essay, actually just show them a little about yourself and don't be shy. Just open up."

Smith added, "Don't just do it for community service hours so you can graduate, [I mean] what's the point in doing it? Just know what you want to do and be confident."

For more information about the American Red Cross at Walter Reed Bethesda, call Marin Reynes at 301-295-1583.

PATIENTS

Continued from pg. 3

initiative to provide "patient-friendly access to high quality care for all we are privileged to serve" and going to other military treatment facilities (MTFs) within the region to provide care where it is most convenient for beneficiaries. "We should partner [with other MTFs] to think about the entire market as opposed to Walter Reed Bethesda or Fort Belvoir Community Hospital [Va.] working independently. We will continue to do more and more of that," the general added.

Also during the town hall, Lt. Cmdr. Pandora Liptrot, WRNMMC equal opportunity officer, called on staff members to volunteer and participate on the command assessment team (CAT). She explained the team meets monthly to assess command climate,

morale and quality of life on base, and take their findings to the WRNMMC director and chief of staff "to try and make the command a better place." The team needs representation from all members of the Walter Reed Bethesda community, including active duty and reserve military, civilian and contract employees, volunteers and beneficiaries. For more information about the CAT, call 301-295-2178.

The new WRNMMC senior enlisted leader, Command Master Chief Tyrone Willis concluded the town hall stating, "Walter Reed Bethesda is a family with a purpose." He said in addition to taking care of patients, it's important we take care of one another. "No person can do everything [alone]; it takes a village." He added keying in on internal customer service has impact externally.

"Walter Reed Bethesda's purpose is patient-



Photo by Sharon Renee Taylor

Walter Reed National Military Medical Center Director Brig. Gen. (Dr.) Jeffrey B. Clark explained during last week's town hall at Walter Reed Bethesda, while the medical center's focus remains on providing high quality and wounded warrior care, "as it should be," more emphasis will be placed on improving administration within the facility.

centered care; passion is taking care of patients; and profession is doing the very best job we can do in everything that we do," Willis said.

The next WRNMMC leadership forum is scheduled for Aug. 5 at 3:30 p.m., and town halls are Aug. 12 at 7 a.m., noon and 3:30 p.m. in Memorial Auditorium.

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